

step is to calculate the expected median returns for the sector using the identified options and futures, as indicated by block 30. The next step is the calculation of the expected range in future returns as implied by prices of options on the futures and various option pricing models, as indicated by block 40. The next step is the calculation of the annualized return for each fund, as indicated by block 50. The next step is the calculation of an annual return adjustment factor for each fund, as indicated by block 60. The annual return adjustment factor is the difference between the annualized return for the fund and the median return for other funds in the sector. The next step is the calculation of the negative variability of returns factor for each fund, as indicated by block 70. The negative variability is a percentage factor equal to the extent to which the fund's return are below the median for any given period. This factor is a comparison of the negative variability of the return for the fund to the median negative variability of return for funds in the corresponding sector. The next step is the determination of the fund group rating, as indicated by block 90. The fund group rating may be on a scale of 1 to 5, and may include an assessment of fund management, efficiency, support, systems and other factors which are reflected in the rating of the fund group. An adjustment is calculated, such as from 80% to 110, for fund group and other qualitative factors, as indicated by block 100. The next step is the calculation of expected annual returns for each fund, as indicated by block 110. A low return is calculated for each fund. The low expected annual return is equal to the median annualized return for the sector, adjusted for the range of returns, the fund's annual return adjustment factor, the adjustment for negative variability of returns, and for the qualitative factors. For example, for a sample fund, with a 6.77% annual return, an expected range of returns for its sector of 1.5%, a 7.5% return for sector, a -0.295% return adjustment factor, and a 0.1% adjustment for negative variability, to obtain a low range of expected annual returns of 6.105%. A high expected annual return and a median expected annual return are both calculated for each fund, as indicated by block 120. The next step is the assignment of a fund rating, as indicated by block 130. A fund rating may be assigned based on the median expected annual return and the range from high to low of expected annual returns. The rating may be a numerical value, such as from 2 to 6, with the rating increasing with the median expected annual return.--

In the claims: